



JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

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ALEYN LYELL READE

Sadly we announce the death on March 28 of Aleyn Lyell Reade, for almost fifty years one of the most active of Johnson scholars. He was seventy-six years old. His mammoth *Reades of Blackwood Hill and Dr. Johnson's Ancestry*, the ten volumes of *Johnsonian Gleanings*, and the huge inclusive index remain as his monument. For patient, accurate genealogical and historical research there will never be anyone like him.

Since so few on this side of the Atlantic knew Reade personally, we would like to provide a short "profile" as our own permanent tribute to an unusual man. Educated at the Merchant Taylor's School, Great Crosby, he spent the greater part of his life as a member of his father's architectural and surveying firm. Not until 1941 when the office was destroyed by enemy action did he give up active business. But his real interest lay in genealogy, and to that subject he devoted all his leisure time. Here his knowledge was enormous. Having begun with an exhaustive account of his own family, and having found that there were connections with that of Dr. Johnson, he turned his attention to getting into print every ascertainable fact concerning Johnson's relatives, friends and acquaintances, concentrating on the period up to 1740. For Johnson's early years Reade has become the absolute authority.

In passing, however, it might be added that he engaged in important research also on Samuel Richardson and other figures. To be mentioned are his elaborate family history *The Mellards and Their Descendants*; the *Audley Pedigrees*; and his memoirs of Dinah Maria Mulock, the authoress of *John Halifax Gentleman*. To list all of Reade's genealogical contributions would leave us no room for anything else.

A bachelor, he lived for many years with a brother and sister in a large Victorian house at Blundellsands near Liverpool. Here your editor first visited him in 1935; here we found him living

alone in 1951. The memory of those visits remains vividly with us. Reade was a man of distinguished appearance and fine physique. During the first world war he had served in a Liverpool regiment, most of the time in France. Because of limited means he had never travelled widely, but he knew his own countryside intimately. Always a great walker, he thought nothing of doing thirty miles or more at a stretch, and each Thursday was set aside for a regular amble. Only during his last years did he pamper himself by cutting the distance down to fifteen or twenty miles. He was a non-smoker and abstainer, not on principle, but merely because tobacco and alcohol meant nothing to him.

With his caustic wit, his forthright and independent character, he much resembled Johnson, and he had something of the latter's inexhaustible curiosity. Everything about human affairs fascinated him. The one essential difference was that Reade had almost no literary or aesthetic interests. As one of his best friends recently commented, "A newspaper gave him more satisfaction than a great poem or a play of Shakespeare. It told of life, real life, and the men and women who made it." In order to keep up with what was going on, Reade customarily read five different papers each day.

To be sure, he did read some books other than peerages and the like, but rarely as literature. For him the arts, and even natural scenery, had little basic appeal. Although he passionately loved the flat country that he had lived in and had known since his childhood, it was a personal matter, tied up with loyal devotion to Liverpool and his pride in the achievements of its inhabitants in every walk of life.

Never really a book-lover, he owned few rare volumes and no Johnson manuscripts. His limited resources had forbidden active collecting. He did not even have a remarkable reference library, and depended largely on public institutions. What he had of value were genealogical works, school registers and the like. These, together with his own notes and manuscripts, have been left to the University of Liverpool for the use of scholars and research students.

Because he rarely left his own immediate neighborhood Reade continually relied on others for information. As he sat in his room at Blundellsands, he stretched out long arms to Percy Laithwaite in Lichfield, to L. F. Powell and R. W. Chapman in Oxford, to countless local antiquaries, to scores of American scholars, in order to gather in every available fact which might turn up. Indefatigable in running down clues, he made discovery after discovery solely through his correspondence.

It is hard for us to realize that "The Gleaner," as his

friends called him, is dead, that his keen intelligence, his skeptical shrewdness is no more. It is sad to think that we will never see Part XII of the *Johnsonian Gleanings*. We will miss his precise communications to *TLS* and *N&Q*. And our long argument, in hours of conversation and countless letters, as to the relative importance of heredity and environment, is over. Reade was convinced that the fact that one of Johnson's great uncles had been a successful barrister was of more importance in his development than any later legal associations. It was blood and family that counted most.

For those of us who knew Aleyn Lyell Reade well, he will always remain a vivid and inspiring force in Johnsonian scholarship.

A GREAT BURKE EDITION

The Carnegie Corporation has made a magnificent contribution to 18th-century scholarship by its recent grant of funds to the proposed edition of Edmund Burke's letters. When the main body of Burke's papers was opened to the public in 1949 (having been kept back for over a century and a half) it was obvious that for the first time we could get a new, complete Burke Correspondence. The University of Chicago Press made the first big move when it offered to provide all expenses of publication. Now that Carnegie has agreed to defray the main editorial expenses, the financial hazards are cleared. Tom Copeland is to be general editor, and will spend the next two years in England working on the project. There are already seven scholars, mostly historians, American, British, and Irish, who have agreed to collaborate on the editorial job. The edition is expected to run to nine or ten volumes, which will appear a volume at a time, beginning in 1956.

Although the main body of the Burke papers, including about 3000 letters, is in the Central Library at Sheffield, hundreds of other letters are distributed about in other places. Copeland and Milton Smith think they have most of these listed -- at least those in public collections. But if any readers know of letters in private hands, or which for other reasons might have escaped their attention, will they drop a line to Copeland, care the English Dept. of Chicago University.

Because his papers were locked up so long, Burke is less known than many of his Johnsonian friends, and far less known than he ought to be. A complete publication of his letters -- if we all see to it that it is complete -- will help restore the man Johnson said was the "first man everywhere."

THE PRONUNCIATION OF "DESMOULINS"

Marshall Waingrow (Yale) writes: "In answer to Mr. Pettit's query about the pronunciation of the name Desmoulins, I can cite two independent authorities. First, there is Boswell: "I then called at Dr. Johnson's. Found him sitting in Mrs. William's room, she in bed, and in the room a Mrs. Desmoulins (pronounced Demullins)...'" (Journal in London, 20 March 1778; *Isham Papers*, XIII, 112). The second is Fanny Burney, who spells the name De Mullin in her diary (extract in *Life* (ed. Hill-Powell), III, 462.

Bertram Davis (Dickinson) adds that in William Shaw's *Memoirs of Johnson* (1785) the author in the Preface lists as one of his chief sources of information "Mrs. Du Maulin."

QUERIES

Charles N. Fifer (Yale) writes that he is editing the correspondence of Boswell with various members of the Literary Club: Beauclerk, Langton, Sir John Hawkins, Charles James Fox, Bishop Percy, Thomas Barnard, Bishop of Killaloe. He would be very happy to know of any material connected with these men which might bear upon their relations with Boswell or with other Club members. He is particularly interested in ascertaining the present ownership of several letters written by Boswell to Percy which were published in Nichol's *Illustrations*. Two of them are in the Berg Collection; a third is owned by Arthur A. Houghton, Jr.; but Fifer has been unable to trace any of the others. If you have any suggestions please send them in.

A correspondent writes about a quotation from Johnson which appears on page 21 of Irving Babbitt's *Rousseau and Romanticism* (1919): "The rejection and contempt of fiction," said Dr. Johnson (who indulged in it himself on occasion) "is rational and manly." The reference is not included in J. E. Brown's *Critical Opinions*, and we cannot put our finger right on it. Can any of you help?

AUTHORSHIP OF THE POLITICAL QUIXOTE

From Miriam Rossiter Small (Wells College) comes the following correction. In her life of Charlotte Lennox in 1935, she accepted Mrs. Lennox as the author of *The History of Sir George Warrington: or the Political Quixote* (London 1797). She now writes: "Through the kindness of Allen T. Hazen I now have

evidence that the cancelled title-pages which give the book to the author of the *Benevolent Quixote* are correct, and that the first issue bearing on the title-page 'By the Author of the *Female Quixote*' is an error." The evidence comes in a note in the *Monthly Magazine* for May 1799 (p. 301) under the heading of "Walpoliana," where a former reference in July 1798 (p. 509) is shown to have been erroneous. The later correction reads:

"Erratum. 'The Political Quixote, or Sir G. Warrington,' said in a former Magazine to be written by the author of the '*Female Quixote*,' is by the author of 'The Benevolent Quixote,' 'Honorina Somerville,' and 'Matilda and Elizabeth,' (the latter in conjunction with her sister). Her name was never published -- she was a very amiable young woman -- Miss Jane Purbeck, of Bath." As Miriam Small adds, "This information has further support in that the CBEL lists *The Benevolent Quixote* as by the Misses Purbeck."

BOSWELL AND JOHNSON NOTES

The next volume of the Boswell edition, scheduled for more or less simultaneous publication by McGraw-Hill and Heinemann next fall, will be *Boswell on the Grand Tour: Germany and Switzerland*. Included will be Boswell's visit to the court of Frederick the Great and other German courts, as well as his fabulous meetings with Rousseau and Voltaire in Switzerland.

The Modern Library has brought out another abridged edition of the *Life of Johnson*, this one made by Bergen Evans (Northwestern). There are a number of regrettable factual errors in the short Introduction.

For an important article containing new information about Boswell's visit to London in 1760 see Andrew G. Hoover, "Boswell's First London Visit" in *Virginia Quarterly*, Spring 1953.

In a box of Shredded Wheat recently opened by our young son was a cardboard cowboy puppet with the intriguing name of "Tag-along Boswell."

Apparently there is a general move to dramatize Johnson and Boswell. Recently at the Everyman's Theatre in Jan Hus House, New York City, there were a number of dramatic readings of a new play by Ida Lubtenski Ehrlich entitled *Doctor Johnson*. The work is a three act drama based on Boswell's *Life* and other sources.

We wonder if you heard over the radio on May 21 the presentation of Johnson's life done on the "Heritage" program for *Life* magazine, with Brian Aherne in the leading role? Certainly it was dramatic if not scholarly accurate. And if a few of us

cringed at the fiction, the apocryphal stories, and Tetty made into a giggling young girl, it must have been entertaining for uninitiated listeners. Johnson in any guise is worth meeting.

From Tom Copeland comes an undated clipping from the *Manchester Guardian*, describing a contest for pantomimes made from literary classics. The winning entry was drawn from the *Life of Johnson*, and blended the old pantomime tradition with such modern devices as an underwater ballet and a trampoline act (whatever that may be!) We cannot resist giving you the cast of characters: Sam Johnson (principal boy); Miss Thrale (principal girl); Mrs. Johnson (Sam's mother -- Dame comedian); Jemmy Boswell (light comedian); Lord Chesterfield (Baron); Ann Williams (Welsh soprano, alias Fairy Queen); "Ossian" Macpherson (Demon King). Listed as Specialities are The Vice-Chancellor of Oxford (Trick Cyclist); and the Proctors (Trampoline Act). A few of the scenes deserve special mention: a dance of the chorus dressed to represent the parts of speech; Dame Johnson's laundry at Lichfield; and the finale where Sam marries Miss Thrale, Jemmy is affianced to old Dame Johnson, and "the entire company, headed by the now repentant Chesterfield, crowd on the stage to wish them well." Alas! nothing is said of any scheduled performance!

The *Yale Library Gazette* for April announces the acquisition of Johnson's copy of the 3rd edition of *A Collection of Miscellanies* by John Norris (1699), used in making the *Dictionary*. Of chief interest is a rare allusion to his brother Nathaniel written in the margin.

There have recently been a number of important articles having to do with the *Dictionary*: W. R. Keast, "The Preface to *A Dictionary of the English Language*: Johnson's Revision of the Text," *Studies in Bibliography* (1952-53), and "Some Emendations in Johnson's Preface to the *Dictionary*," *RES*, January 1953; Arthur Sherbo, "Dr. Johnson's Revision of His *Dictionary*," *PQ*, October 1952; Gwin J. Kolb and James H. Sledd, "Johnson's *Dictionary* and Lexicographical Tradition," *MP*, February 1953; A. D. Atkinson, "Dr. Johnson's Prose Reading," *N&Q* for Feb. and March; Benjamin and Dorothy Boyce, "Dr. Johnson's Definitions of 'Tory' and 'Whig,'" *N&Q*, April 1953.

Other recent articles to be mentioned are: Ettore Allodoli, "Poliziano e Johnson," *La Rinascita*, September 1952; William B. Todd, "Concealed Editions of Samuel Johnson" [political pamphlets], *The Book Collector*, Spring 1953; Maurice Quinlan, "The Reaction to Dr. Johnson's *Prayers and Meditations*," *JEGP*, April 1953; Bertram D. Sarason, "George Croft and Dr. Johnson," *N&Q*, March 1953.

NEW BOOKS

All students of Swift will be interested in John M. Bullitt's (Harvard) *Jonathan Swift and the Anatomy of Satire: a Study of Satiric Technique* (Harvard Univ. Press). So far, we have been too busy to give it the serious study it deserves, but hope to soon. Bullitt's work is analytical and critical, not biographical or historical. Instead of concentrating on individual works, he investigates Swift's devices against the background of the intellectual currents of the day. A listing of chapter headings will show the nature of the examination: "Exposure by Ridicule," "Satiric Detachment: Invective, Diminution," "The Rhetoric of Satire," "The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit," "The Triumph of Artifice."

C. V. Wicker's *Edward Young and the Fear of Death: a Study in Romantic Melancholy* (Univ. of New Mexico Press) is an attempt to explain the failure of the author of the *Night Thoughts* to hold his initial popularity. As Wicker sums it up, because Young's "sentimentalism gradually lost its appeal, because his religion was, like his philosophy, narrow and selfish, and because his literary manner was a good deal less than perfect," his influence, which lasted so long, finally came to all but nothing. But you should read Wicker's analysis for yourself.

We owe Gale Noyes (Brown) a great debt of gratitude, for he has done what not many of us would have taken the time or the trouble to do. He has read through some 750 18th-century novels, published for the most part during the Garrick period, searching for references to Shakespeare or critical comments on his plays. In passing, it might be noted that about one novel in every seven contained something pertinent to his topic. The results of this long research appear in *The Thespian Mirror: Shakespeare in the Eighteenth-century Novel* (Brown University Press). And Noyes has turned up many very interesting passages, amusing in themselves, and valuable for any understanding of the development of Romantic Shakespeare idolatry. The book contains a mass of new evidence about 18th-century taste and theatrical enthusiasms.

Mentioned in our last was Derick S. Thomson's *The Gaelic Sources of Macpherson's 'Ossian'* (Univ. of Aberdeen), but we wish to say something more about its value for those of us who teach the literature of the 1760's. Here is an admirable statement of the facts about Macpherson's sources, what manuscripts were actually available at the time, and how they were used. Thomson compares the old ballads with Macpherson's versions, showing how the "Ossianic" trappings were added, how the

simple originals were expanded through empty verbiage, because of Macpherson's incapacity of telling a plain tale in a plain way.

Students of aesthetics should welcome the facsimile reprint by the Augustan Reprint Society of Thomas Morrison's *A Pindarick Ode on Painting* (1767). Ted Hilles and J. T. Kirkwood have provided a valuable Preface and a Biographical Introduction, full of new information about Morrison and his poem.

Useful for research students is G. A. Cranfield, *A Hand-list of English Provincial Newspapers and Periodicals 1700-1760*, issued as Monograph No. 2 by the Cambridge Bibliographical Society. Included are details about 146 different items.

We are glad to receive from Esmond de Beer a copy of an excellent little pamphlet *The Coronation in History*, by B. Wilkinson of the Univ. of Toronto. It is published for the Historical Ass'n for 2/6.

Geoffrey Beard has compiled an attractive Guide Book to Hagley Hall, the home of the Lyttelton's in Worcestershire, now in the possession of Viscount Cobham. Along with it come four pages of printed notes on the principal picture, compiled by Colonel J. Hassell. The Hall is now open to visitors on weekdays April through September, the Park every day throughout the year.

Other new books to be mentioned are: David Baumgardt, *Bentham and the Ethics of Today*; Lucy S. Sutherland, *The East India Company in Eighteenth Century Politics* (O.U.P.); Averil Mackenzie-Grieve, *The Great Accomplishment: the Contributions of Five English Women to Eighteenth-Century Colonization* (Bles); Laura Jepson, *Ethical Aspects of Tragedy* (Univ. of Florida Press) (useful principally as background); Aram Vartanian, *Diderot and Descartes: a Study of Scientific Naturalism in the Enlightenment* (Princeton); Arthur Colby Sprague, *Shakespeare Players and Performances* (Harvard).

Sir Richard Blackmore

While no one could call Blackmore a major literary figure, he does cross the paths of others more gifted, and he does have a definite historical importance. Thus we welcome the excellent factual biography entitled *Sir Richard Blackmore: a Poet and Physician of the Augustan Age* by Albert Rosenberg (Univ. of Nebraska Press). Not intended as an extended critical analysis of his poetry, the book brings together all that has been discovered about his life. And here Rosenberg has done some ad-

mirable research. We have space here for only one example, but it is one we intend using year after year in our seminar as a warning and a stimulus.

Until Rosenberg came along the actual date of Blackmore's birth had not been ascertained, though two 20th-century scholars had seriously searched for the evidence. The parish records had been examined, but the page for 1654 in the Corsham register was so badly torn that the entries were no longer decipherable. Thus the scholars were thrown back on conjecture, one merely proposing 1654, the other September 1653. Then Rosenberg had one more look at the register, and found that the mystery was the result of a careless job of binding. When the volume was bound in 1758 some pages were inserted wrong side up and out of chronological order. And on one of the incorrectly bound pages appeared the entries for 1653/54, with the notation: "Richard. Sonne of Roberte Blackmore Borne January 22." The moral? Don't trust anyone to do your searching for you -- if you can possibly help it.

SOME RECENT ARTICLES

For Dryden and the Restoration period there are: H. T. Swedenberg, "More Tears for Lord Hastings," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, November 1952, "England's Joy: *Astraea Redux* in Its Setting," *SP*, January 1953; G. Blakemore Evans, "The Text of Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe*," *Harvard Library Bulletin*, Winter 1953; J. Kinsley, "Dryden and the Art of Praise," *English Studies*, April; John Winterbottom, "The Development of the Hero in Dryden's Tragedies," *JEGP*, April; George G. Watson, "Contributions to a Dictionary of Critical Terms: *Imagination and Fancy*," *Essays in Criticism*, April; W.B. Todd, "The 1680 Editions of Rochester's *Poems* with Notes on Earlier Texts," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, First Quarter 1953; A.L. McLeod, "Nathaniel Lee's Portrait," *N&Q*, March; Raymond A. Biswanger, "The Date of Thomas Durfey's 'The Richmond Heiress,'" *N&Q*, March; Richard H. Popkin, "Joseph Glanville: a Precursor of David Hume," *JHI*, April.

For the major Augustans: Émile Pons, "Swift et Pascal: Note Complémentaire," *Les Langues Modernes*, March-April 1951 (a condensation in *Études Anglaises*, Nov. 1952); Vinton A. Dearing, "Jonathan Swift or William Wagstaffe," *Harvard Library Bulletin*, Winter 1953; George Sherburn, "Gibberish in 1730-31," *N&Q*, April; Louis A. Landa, "The Insolent Rudeness of Dr. Swift," *MLN*, April; T.J. Brown, "English Literary Autographs: V. Jonathan Swift," *Book Collector*, Spring 1953; R.H. Griffith, "Pope on the Art of

Gardening," *Texas Studies in English* 1952; Rebecca Price Parkin, "Tension in Alexander Pope's Poetry," *Univ. of Kansas City Review*, Spring 1953; Norman Callen, "Pope's *Iliad*: a New Document," *RES*, April; Henry J. Cadbury, "Bishop Berkeley's Gifts to the Harvard Library: I. Gifts in 1733 and Earlier," *Harvard Library Bulletin*, Winter 1953; A. D. McKillop, "The Reception of Thomson's *Liberty*," *N&Q*, March; Benjamin Boyce, "The Question of Emotion in Defoe," *SP*, January.

Concerned with the mid-century are: J. Drever, "A Note on Hume's Pyrrhonism," *Philosophical Quart.*, January; H. Rossiter Smith, "Thomas Gray and His Italian Teacher," *N&Q*, March; Lyle Glazier, "Gray's Elegy: 'The Skull Beneath the Skin,'" *Univ. of Kansas City Review*, Spring 1953; L. P. Goggin, "Fielding and the Select Comedies of Mr. de Molière," *PQ*, July 1952; Kenneth Monkman, "An Annotated Copy of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*," *ABA Annual*, 1952; Lewis M. Knapp, "Forged 'Smollett' Letters," *N&Q*, April; Walter J. Hipple, Jr., "General and Particular in the *Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds: a Study in Method," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, March; Arnold Muirhead, "Jonas Hanway," *ABA Annual*, 1952; W. H. Bond, "Christopher Smart's Last Years," *TLS*, April 10; George Hilton Jones, "The Jacobites, Charles Molloy, and *Common Sense*," *RES*, April; Francesco Cordasco, "Two Junius Problems Resolved," *Neophilologus*, Oct. 1952, "Thomas Paine and the History of 'Junius': a Forgotten Cause Célèbre," *JEGP*, April; E. P. Dandridge Jr., "An Eighteenth Century Theft of Chaucer's 'Purse,'" *MLN*, April; Robert R. Heitner, "Diderot's Own Miss Sara Sampson," *Comparative Lit.*, Winter 1953; Walter J. Ong, "Peter Ramus and the Naming of Methodism," *JHI*, April; Lillian de la Torre, "Forged 'Hamilton' Letter," *N&Q*, April; P. H. Muir, "The Ireland Shakespeare Forgeries," *The Book Collector*, Spring 1953; Bertram D. Sarason, "Edmund Burke and the Two *Annual Registers*," *PMLA*, June.

For the later period: David V. Erdman, "The Dating of William Blake's Engravings," *PQ*, July 1952, "Blake's Nest of Villains," *Keats-Shelley Journal*, Jan. 1953; George M. Harper, "The Source of Blake's 'Ah! Sun-flower,'" *MLR*, April; W. G. Soler, "Two Variants on John Dickinson's 'Ode on the French Revolution,'" *N&Q*, February; Howard A. Burton, "The Life and English Works of Thomas James Mathias," Abstract of Univ. of Calif. dissertation 1952.

We trust you have noticed that a very large part of the March number of *ELH* is given over to our period. Included are: W. K. Wimsatt, Jr. "The Augustan Mode in English Poetry"; Bertrand H. Bronson, "The Pre-Romantic or Post-Augustan Mode"; Josephine

Miles, "The Romantic Mode in Poetry"; Earl Wasserman, "Nature Moralized: the Divine Analogy in the Eighteenth Century." Also to be mentioned is R. D. Havens, "Assumed Personality, Insanity, and Poetry," *RES*, January. For beginning students a valuable summary is T. J. Brown, "The Detection of Faked Literary MSS," *The Book Collector*, Spring 1953.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS ITEMS

Lady Salmond has deposited in the Hertford County Record Office her large collection of manuscripts at Panshanger House. There are over 100 cases of letters to the 2nd Lord Melbourne, and diaries and family papers of the Cowper family, including letters to and from the poet William Cowper.

Neilson C. Hannay expects to spend a long summer in England working on two major projects -- his long-awaited complete edition of Cowper's letters, and a comprehensive biography. As he comments, uncollected and unpublished letters continue to turn up.

It is good news that Esmond de Beer has reached "W" in indexing his great edition of Evelyn's diary. We will all hope to see the completed volumes in 1954.

We welcome other news letters: *The New Rambler*, No. 22; *Mercurius Redivivus* from the William Andrews Clark Library, No. 2; *A News Letter from the Institute of Early American History and Culture* at Williamsburg, Virginia (Nos. 1 and 2); and of course our sister publication for the seventeenth century.

Frances S. Fink (104 Clark Rd., Brookline, Mass.) is progressing with her list of American-held 18th-century portraits having literary associations. Send her any suggestions you may have.

S. C. Roberts, of Cambridge, has been elected President of the Library Ass'n.

A. Lloyd-Jones writes that shortly before her death Queen Mary read R. W. Chapman's address, given when laying the wreath at Westminster Abbey on December 13 and, though she was very ill, dictated an enthusiastic letter about it.

One theatrical performance we are particularly sorry to have missed -- *Tom Thumb* played at Yale, with Bill Wimsatt as Glumdalca, Queen of the Giants. For the occasion he wrote a very amusing special epilogue, which we would have passed on to you, if only there had been space.

Wimsatt, by the way, sends on a footnote to our announcement in *TLS* of May 30, 1952, of the discovery of some letters from

Johnson to Mrs. Way of Denham Place. He writes that the Ways owned one of the Richardson portraits of Alexander Pope, a profile with fur collar (similar to one owned now by Jim Osborn). The picture is now at Petworth, and has a long inscription on the back, possibly dictated by Mrs. Way, telling how she got it from her father Dr. Cooke, who got it from Pope's friend Dr. Mead. If the portrait was kept in the country at Denham Place it still is doubtful whether Johnson ever saw it, for the rumor that he used to visit the Way family there cannot be proved.

COMING BOOKS

The following have been announced for early publication: Cecil A. Moore, *Backgrounds of English Literature, 1700-1780* (Univ. of Minn. Press); *The Letters of David Hume* (supplementary volume to Greig's edition) (O.U.P.); Peter Smithers, *The Life of Joseph Addison* (O.U.P.); James Sutherland, *The Oxford Book of English Talk* (O.U.P.); C.J. Horne, editor, *Swift and His Age* (Life, Literature and Thought Library); William Beckford's *Journals in Portugal and Spain, 1787-1795*, edited by Boyd Alexander; Michael Joyce, *Edward Gibbon* (Men and Books Series).

Expected soon are new editions of Ricardo Quintana's *The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swift*; and A. Bosker's *Literary Criticism in the Age of Johnson*.

Wallace C. Brown writes that the University of Kansas Press is bringing out this summer his book on the life and works of Charles Churchill.

"IMPRANSUS"

In one of Johnson's early letters to Cave at St. John's Gate he signs himself "Impransus" (*Letters*, No. 10), and many readers have assumed that it was a confession of his lack of money with which to buy food. Yet, as has been pointed out, it may merely be a way of saying that he has been so hard at work that he has not thought of dining. Arthur Sherbo (Illinois) writes: "I do not recall that anybody has sought a literary reminiscence for Johnson's use of *impransus*, yet it is quite probable that he was recollecting some previous use of the word. Harper's *Latin Dictionary* and Forcellini's *Totius Latinatis Lexicon* list examples of its usage in Plautus and Horace. Johnson knew both writers, of course, although references to Plautus are rare in his works and conversation. *Impransus* occurs twice in Plautus' *Amphitruo* (I, i, 98 and III, ii, 71). Is it significant that, so far as I can discover, the only time that Johnson quotes Plautus it is from *Amphitruo* (*Johnsonian Miscellanies*, II, 309)?"